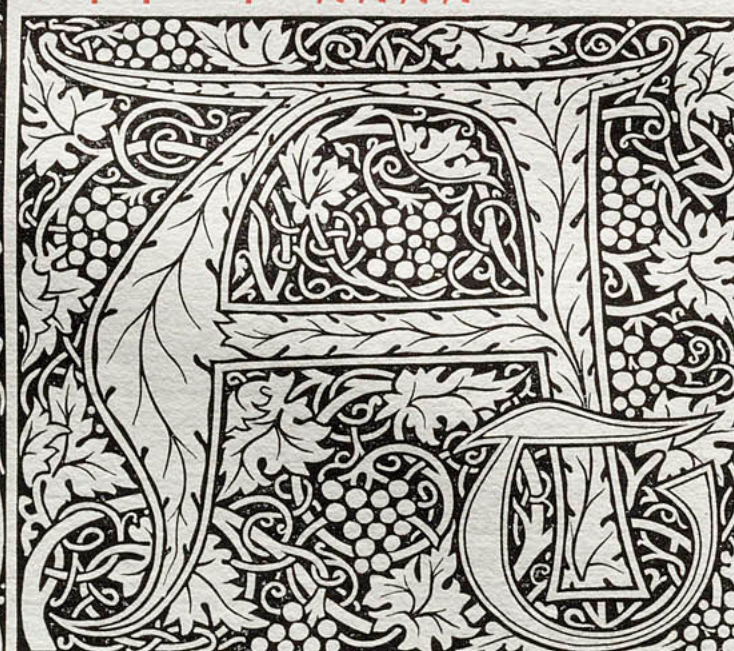


Ye maze, maze, goode sire, quod she;
This thank have I for I have maad yow see;
Allas! quod she, that evere I was so kynde!
Now, dame, quod he, lat al passe out of mynde.
Com doun, my lief, and if I have myssayd,
God help me so, as I am yvele apayd.
But, by my fader soule! I wende han seyn,
How that this Damyan had by thee leyn,
And that thy smok had leyn upon his brest.
Ye, sire, quod she, ye may wene as yow lest;
But, sire, a man that waketh out of his sleep,
He may nat sodeynly wel taken keep
Upon a thyng, ne seen it parfitly,
Til that he be adawed verrailly;
Right so a man, that longe hath blynd ybe,
Ne may nat sodeynly so wel yse,
First whan his sighte is newe come ageyn,
As he that hath a day or two yseyn.
Til that youre sighte ysattled be a while,
Ther may ful many a sighte yow bigile.
Beth war, I prey yow; for, by hevne kyng,
Ful many a man weneth to seen a thyng,
And it is al another than it semeth.
He that mysconceyvet, he mysdemeth.
And with that word she leep doun fro the tree.
This Januarie, who is glad but he?
He kisseth hire, and clippeth hire ful ofte,
And on hire wombe he stroketh hire ful softe;
And to his palays boom he bath hire lad.
Now, goode men, I pray yow to be glad.
Thus endeth heere my tale of Januarie;
God blesse us, and his mooder Seinte Marie!
Heere is ended the Marchantes Tale of Januarie.

HEERE BIGYNNETH THE SQUIERES TALE

Incipit prima pars



SARRAY, IN THE LAND OF Tartary,
Ther dwelte a kyng, that werreyed Russye,

Words of the Host to the Squire

A Goddes mercy!
seyde oure Hoost tho,
Now swich a wyf I
pray God kepe me fro!
Lo, whiche sleighes
and subtilitees
In wommen been! for
ay as bisy as bees
Been they, us sely men
for to deceyve;
And from a sothe evere wol they weyve.
By this Marchauntes tale it preveth weel.
But doutelees, as trewe as any steel
I have a wyf, though that she poure be;
But of hir tonge a labbyng shrewe is she,
And yet she hath an heep of vices mo;
Therof no fors, lat alle swiche thynges go.
But wyte ye what? In conseil be it seyde,
Me reweth soore I am unto hire teyde;
for, and I sholde rekenen every vice
Which that she hath, ywis, I were to nyce,
And cause why; it sholde reported be
And toold to hire of somme of this meynee;
Of whom, it nedeth nat for to declare,
Synn wommen konnen outen swich chaffare;
And eek my wit suffiseth nat therto
To tellen al; wherfore my tale is do.
SQUIER, come neer, if it youre wille be,
And sey somwhat of love; for certes, ye
Konnen theron as mucche as any man.
Nay, sir, quod he, but I wol seye as I kan
With hertly wyl; for I wol nat rebelle
Agayn youre lust; a tale wol I telle.
Have me excused, if I speke amys,
My wyl is good; and lo, my tale is this.

Thurgh which ther deyde many a doughty man.
This noble kyng was cleped Cambynskan,
Which in his tyme was of so greet renoun
That ther was nowher in no regiou
So excellent a lord in alle thyng;
Hym lakked noght that longeth to a kyng.
As of the secte of which that he was born
He kepte his lay, to which that he was
sworn;
And therto he was hardy, wys, and riche,
And pious and just, alwey yliche;
Sooth of his word, benigne and honorable,
Of his corage as any centre stable;
Yong, fressh, and strong, in armes desirous
As any bacheler of al his hous.
A fair persone he was, and fortunat,
And kepte alwey so wel roial estat
That ther was nowher swich another man.
This noble kyng, this Tarte Cambynskan
Hadde two sones on Elpheta his wyf,
Of whiche the eldeste highte Hlgarsyf,



That oother sone was cleped Cambalo.
A doghter hadde this worthy kyng also,
That yongest was, and highte Canacee.
But for to telle yow al hir beautee
It lyth nat in my tonge nyn my konnyng;
I dar nat undertake so heigh a thyng.
Myn Englissh eek is insufficient;
It moste been a rethor excellent
That koude his colours longynge for that art.
If he sholde hire discryven every part.
I am noon swich, I moot speke as I kan.
And so bifel that, whan this Cambynskan
Hath twenty wynter born his diademe,
As he was wont fro yeer to yeer, I deme,
He leet the feeste of his nativitee
Doon cryen thurghout Sarray his citee,
The last Idus of March, after the yeer.
DHEBUS, the sonne, ful joly was and
cleer,
for he was neigh his exaltacioun
In Martes face, and in his mansioun
In Aries, the colerik boote signe.
ful lusty was the weder and benigne,
for which the fowles, agayn the sonne sheene,
What for the sesoun and the yonge grene,
ful loude songen hire affeccions;
hem semed han geten hem protecciouns
Agayn the swerd of wynter keene and coold.

This Cambynskan, of which I have yow toold,
In roial vestiment sit on his deys,
With diademe, ful heighe in his paleys,
And halt his feeste, so solempne & so ryche,
That in this world ne was ther noon it lyche.
Of which if I shal tellen al tharray,
Thanne wolde it occupie a someres day;
And eek it nedeth nat for to devyse
At every cours the ordre of hire servyse.
I wol nat tellen of hir strange sewes,
Ne of hir swannes, ne of hire heronsewes.
Eek in that lond, as tellen knyghtes olde,
Ther is som mete that is ful deynte holde
That in this lond men recche of it but smal;
Ther nys no man that may reporten al.
I wol nat taryen yow, for it is pryme,
And for it is no fruyt but los of tyme;
Unto my firste I wole have my recours.
And so bifel that, after the thridd cours,
Whil that this kyng sit thus in his
nobleye,
Her knynghechismynstralles hir thynges pleye
Biforn hym at the bord deliciously,
In at the halle dore, al sodeynly,
Ther cam a knyght upon a steede of bras,
And in his hand a brood mirour of glas.
Upon his thombe he hadde of gold a ring,